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VBH BOT FYI Roads&Bridges

1 message

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Addams tollway might be rebuilt with more lanes, mass transit
Express buses, commuter rail line could go down median, planners say
By Richard Wronski, Chicago Tribune reporter

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[PHOTO] Early morning drivers speed along the cracked and damaged
concrete surface of the Jane Addams Tollway at the Beverly overpass.
(Stacey Wescott/Tribune)

The Illinois tollway and other transportation agencies have high hopes
for collaborating on future highway and mass transit projects.

For now, though, the tollway has decided to resurface only 27 miles of
the 77-mile-long Addams this year, while the agency, other public
officials and transportation leaders consider how to incorporate
big-ticket options into future construction.

The tollway's master plan for the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway
includes several options for adding bus and commuter-rail components
to help meet demand. The tollway also needs to be reconstructed from
Interstate 39 near Rockford to the Kennedy Expressway because of the
deterioration of the more than 50-year-old infrastructure.

The costs of rebuilding, widening and adding other transportation
improvements to the Addams range from \$1.9 billion to \$4.5 billion.
Anticipated toll revenue alone isn't enough to pay the costs, and the
tollway would have to work with transit agencies such as Pace and
Metra.

Among the options:

- Reconstruct and widen: Rebuilding the tollway with concrete and
widening the Addams to three lanes in each direction from I-39 to the
Elgin Toll Plaza and four lanes in each direction from the plaza to
the Kennedy Expressway.
- Reconstruct, widen, add express bus service and high-occupancy toll
(HOT) lanes: Express bus and HOT lanes could use either the innermost
lanes or use right-of-way in medians. The tollway would not pay for
the stations and buses.
- Reconstruct, widen and add commuter rail: The proposed
suburb-to-suburb Metra STAR Line could run in the median from Prairie
Stone in Hoffman Estates east to O'Hare International Airport. But
once-high hopes for building the STAR Line have dimmed because of a

lack of funding. As with express buses, the tollway would not pay for commuter rail infrastructure.

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